



**TPC Group Plant Explosion and Fire Update  
Port Neches, Texas  
December 13, 2019 1100 Update**

**Incident Management Objectives:**

**Objective 1:** Ensure the health and safety of the public and response personnel.

**Objective 2:** Establish an incident management structure and processes employing the Incident Command System to enable effective overall management of the event with deployment of resources (staff and equipment) in a rapid, focused and well-coordinated manner.

**Objective 3:** Encourage a collaborative federalism approach, where Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments interact cooperatively and collectively to solve common problems.

**Objective 4:** Take actions to assess the on-site and off-site impacts during the emergency response phase of this incident. Provide this information to state and local authorities to assist them in their decision to protect the local citizens.

**Objective 5:** Conduct activities to prevent off-site releases from the TPC facility.

**Objective 6:** Respond to, mitigate and recovery off-site releases from the TPC facility.

**Objective 7:** Maintain open communication with Regional management.

**Incident Overview:**

On November 27, 2019, a report was received from the National Response Center about an explosion at a facility in Port Neches, TX.

A second explosion occurred at approximately 1400 on November 27, 2019. Residents within a four-mile radius of the site were ordered to evacuate. The evacuation was lifted at 1000 on November 29, 2019.

**Executive Overview:**

- December 12, 2019, Unified Command transitioned to a 48-hour operational period.
- Since the last update, schools in the Port Neches-Groves ISD continue to remain open. Air monitoring teams from TPC (CTEH), TCEQ, and EPA continued to perform community air monitoring in the area of the schools daily as prescribed in the air monitoring plan for the schools (prior to the start of the school day, during, and after).
- On the evening of December 9, 2019, EPA, ATSDR, and Texas Poison Center Network participated in a Port Neches-Groves ISD board meeting; providing updates on response status and answering questions or concerns.
- The ATSDR team demobilized on December 11, 2019 after providing support through engaging local health officials and addressing questions on human-health concerns.

- Two low-volume / low-pressure fires reported by TPC on December 6, 2019, continue to burn. These fires appear to pose no threat and will be allowed to burn out on their own.
- CTEH has continued air monitoring in the work area for 1,3-butadiene:
  - Conducted 558 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 9, 2019 thru 1430 on December 10, 2019. Ten detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 0.41 ppm.
  - Conducted 522 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 10, 2019 thru 1430 on December 11, 2019. Eight detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 1.12 ppm.
  - Conducted 577 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 11, 2019 thru 1430 on December 12, 2019. Twelve detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 1.28 ppm.
  - Conducted 353 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 12, 2019 thru 0815 on December 13, 2019. Thirty-one detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 9.42 ppm.
- CTEH has continued air monitoring in the community for 1,3-butadiene:
  - Conducted 2,053 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 9, 2019 thru 1430 on December 10, 2019. eleven detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 0.13 ppm.
  - Conducted 1,965 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 10, 2019 thru 1430 on December 11, 2019. Ten detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 0.40 ppm.
  - Conducted 993 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 11, 2019 thru 1430 on December 12, 2019. Six detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 0.17 ppm.
  - Conducted 769 air monitoring readings from 1430 on December 12, 2019 thru 0815 on December 13, 2019. Forty-five detections were recorded with a maximum reading of 1.27 ppm.
- EPA continued community handheld air monitoring from December 9, 2019 thru December 12, 2019 with a team on standby until December 13, 2019. No concentrations above the action level have been detected in the community by EPA teams since December 5, 2019.
- ASPECT was demobilized on the evening of December 9, 2019 after conducting aerial air monitoring in the vicinity of the Site and downwind community since November 27.
- EPA continued daily surface water sampling from December 9, 2019 thru December 12, 2019. EPA collected 5 surface water samples in the affected canal up to the Neches River and 1 surface water sample upstream of the incident.
- TPC continues responding to reports to the hotline for recovering debris.
- As of December 12, 2019, there have been no wildlife hotline calls for 120 hours. Wildlife Response personnel are on call, with no EOC presence since December 9, 2019.
- On December 11, 2019, Unified Command (UC) approved the Environmental Assessment Reduction Plan, which reduces water sampling efforts.
- On December 11, 2019, UC approved the Preliminary Data Summary for the Reduction of Air Monitoring and Sampling Activities Plan, which reduces the air monitoring and sampling efforts to a one-mile radius from the Site.
- As of December 13, TPC has reported three tanks (33, 35, and 36) with low to no pressurized vapor emission leaks. Listing (leaning) tank 33 containing high butane raffinate is being assessed to secure the tank for access to determine leak location. Tank 35 has a leaking flange. Tank 36 has leaking relief valve. No resulting community air monitoring measurements or off-site impacts observed from these three tanks.

Following discussions with TCEQ and TPC regarding current Site conditions, the EPA FOSC transitioned oversight to TCEQ SOSC for long-term remediation and consequence management

on December 13, 2019, since community air monitoring results have been below community action levels since December 6, 2019, and no new surface water impacts from the facility since the first week of the response. TPC will notify the EPA FOSC when the three leaking tanks have been secured and will provide a final report upon completion of the response effort. The EPA FOSC may reactivate Unified Command in the event any emergencies arise during the follow up work by TPC. The transition plan was signed by EPA, TCEQ, and TPC and transmitted to TPC on December 13, 2019 at 1000.

This is the Final Management Update.